

KONFLIK ELIT DI MALAYSIA TH. 1987-1998

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ABSTRAK

Social conflicts in Malaysia since 1980s, two decades after the successful New Economic Policy (NEP), can be identified as political conflicts among elites rather than ethnic conflicts. The political struggle was fought over the distribution of material benefits rather than ethnic interests. These conflicts were different from the earlier ones that centered on ethnicity or issues concerning ethnic interests. During 1987 to 1998, there were two major conflicts in Malaysia, namely UMNO split (in 1987) and conflict between Mahathir and Anwar (in 1998).

The Questions of conflicts is viewed as inseparable from socio-economic considerations. As a consequence of the structural changes and social mobilization caused by a long period of economic growth, semi-authoritarian regime in Malaysia must face more political pressures, both from elites and masses, demanding more democracy and clean government.

Apart from their several similarities on policy issues and pattern of escalations, these two conflicts have one distinct contrast. For his confrontation with Mahathir, Anwar, inspired by reformasi movement in Indonesia that forced President Suharto to resign on Mei 1999, called for mass support and mass demonstrations, especially from students and Malay middle class, to bring about change in the government. But, poor organizational and networking made the Malaysia's reformasi movement failed to achieve its end.

Keywords : conflict, elite, middle-class, material benefit, policy issue